

A bill for an act
relating to early childhood education; creating an Office of Early Learning;
proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 4.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **[4.046] OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING.**

(a) An Office of Early Learning is established to coordinate a high-quality early childhood system in Minnesota to make such programs more effective and to improve the educational outcomes of all children. The governor must appoint, subject to the advice and consent of the senate, a director who is a recognized expert in the field of early childhood care and education who will facilitate communication and coordinate prekindergarten and child care programs under the administration of the Departments of Education and Human Services.

(b) The director of the Office of Early Learning must report to the commissioners of education and human services and must coordinate Departments of Education and Human Services staff efforts to:

(1) coordinate and facilitate resources and public funding streams for early childhood education and child care, and ensure the accountability and coordinated development of all early childhood education and child care services to children from birth to age five;

(2) work with the Departments of Education and Human Services and the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation (MELF) to create common standards for quality early childhood programming;

(3) create a seamless transition from early childhood programs to kindergarten that aligns with kindergarten through grade 3 standards;

(4) encourage family choice by ensuring a system of public and private market programs that is publicly funded, high-quality, regulated, and that reflects the diversity of the family values and cultural heritage represented in the community;

(5) develop and oversee an effective data collection system to support the necessary functions of a coordinated system of early childhood education and child care;

(6) plan and implement a quality rating and improvement system that is based on the goal that all Minnesota's children have access to high-quality early learning and care programs in a range of settings that meet the needs of children and their families; and

(7) prior to the creation of a quality rating and improvement system, employ the Minnesota quality rating system rating tool in use in fiscal year 2008.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 2. **OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING; ESTABLISHMENT.**

The governor must appoint the director of the Office of Early Learning according to Minnesota Statutes, section 4.046, by December 1, 2009.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.